

Analysis of Global Dynamics and Cultural Knowledge:

Revealing assets to develop opportunities

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Introduction

Cross-cultural skills are needed more than ever for extension educators in many regions of the U.S., including in Minnesota where Extension educators work and partner with diverse communities across the state. University of Minnesota (UM) Extension acknowledges the gap in cross-cultural skills among extension educators. To eliminate this gap, Extension inventoried experiences of staff for developing cross-cultural skills as a new norm for the organization.



Goal and Objectives

Inventory the cross-cultural experience of UM Extension staff to:

- **Identify current expertise** of Extension educators and faculty based on cross-cultural experiences;
- **Measure the use** of global dynamics and cultural knowledge in programs; and
- **Evaluate future opportunities** for integrating global dynamics understanding and cultural knowledge into all program areas.



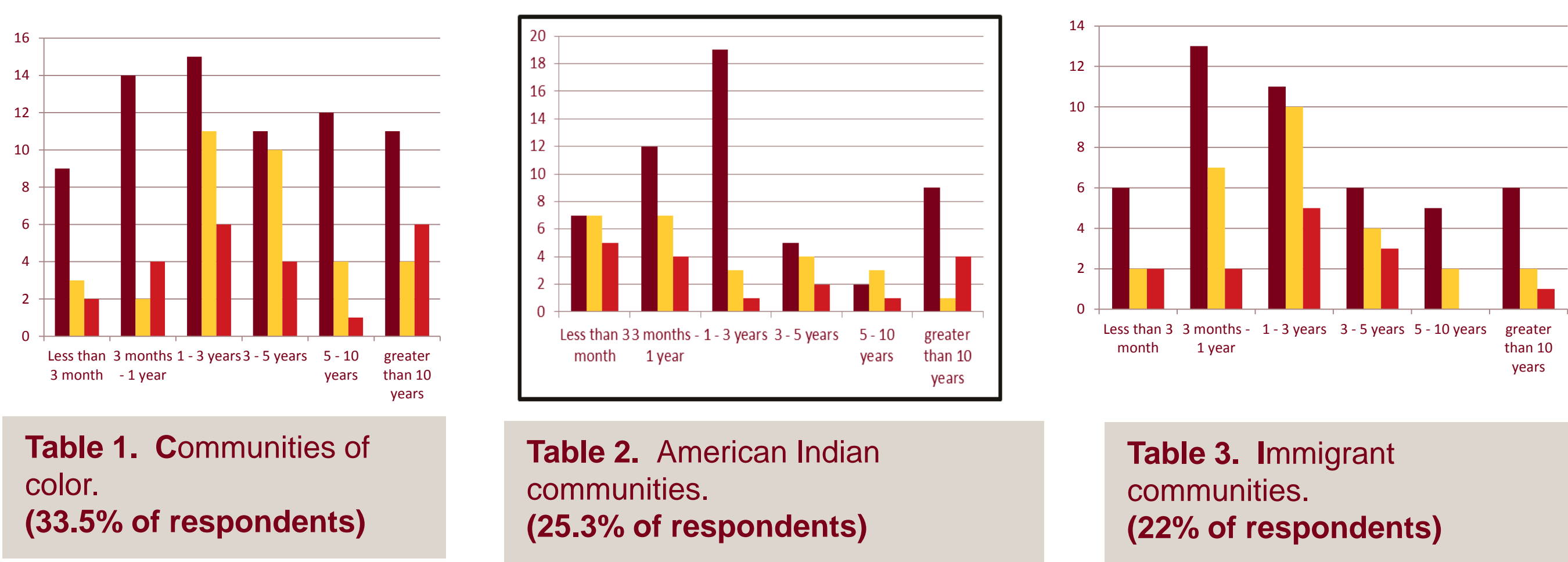
Method

An online survey was used to distribute a 27 question survey to over 300 Extension faculty and staff. The survey included mixed types of questions permitting individuals to reply to probing questions for specific details of their experiences. Analysis included descriptive statistics of the replies. The results are based on 242 completed surveys.

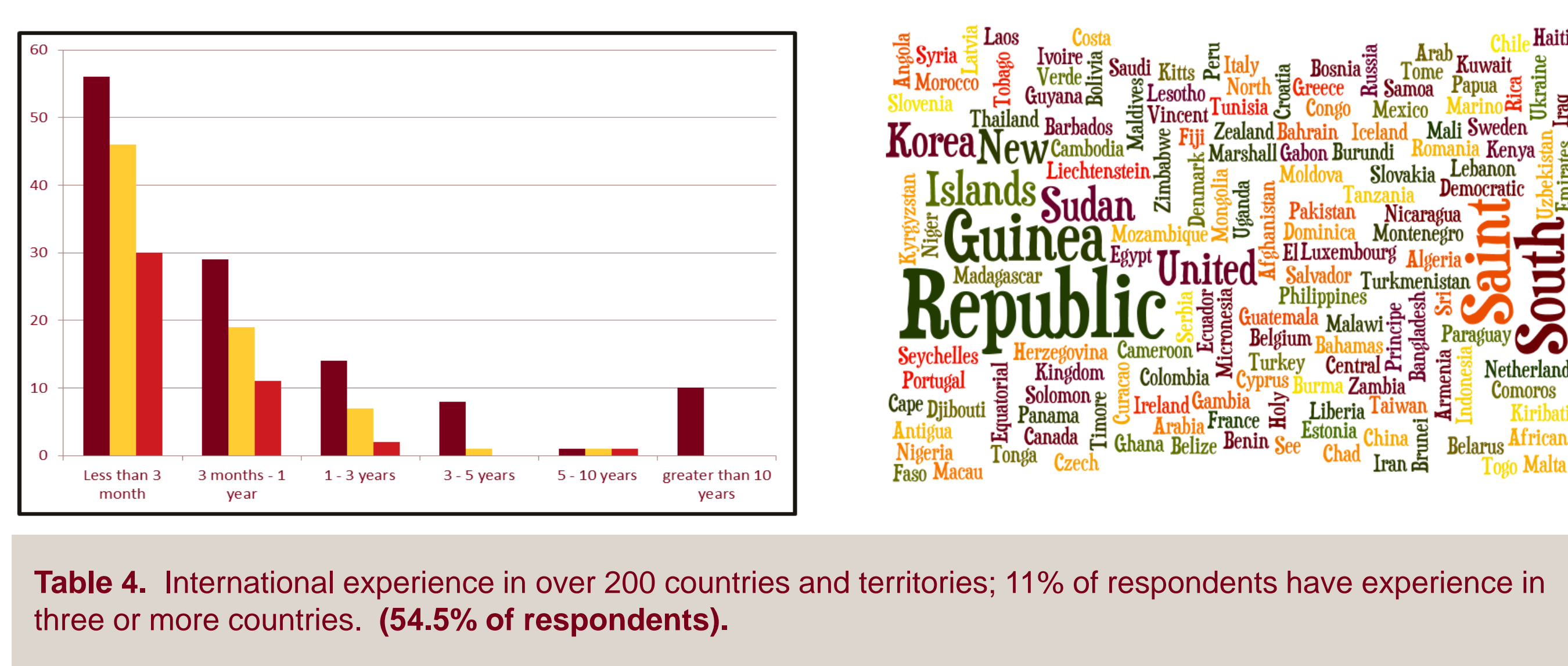
Assets

Global dynamics is the interplay of global realities that affect local realities (agriculture, economics, political, social, culture and environment.) **Cultural knowledge** refers to understanding and appreciating cultures represented in program participants, partners and colleagues.

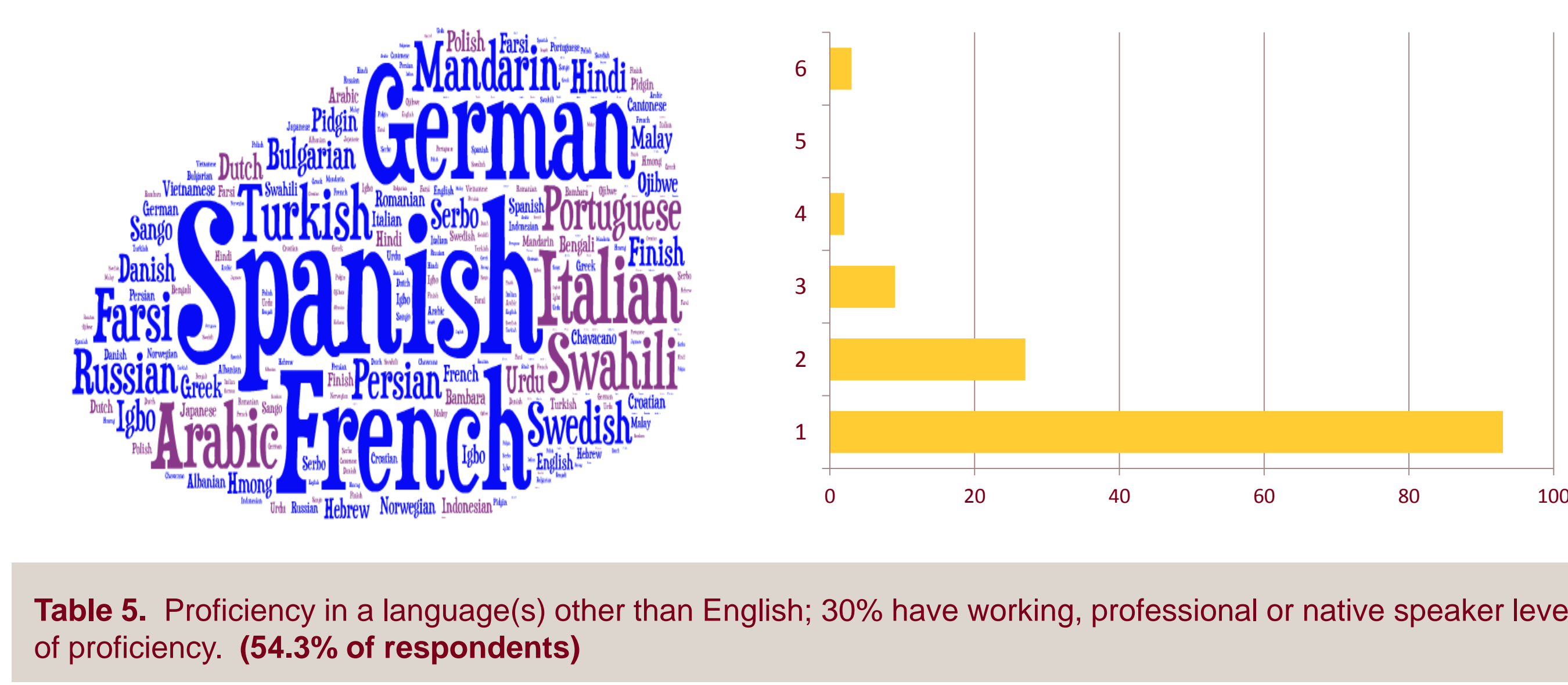
Multicultural Experience



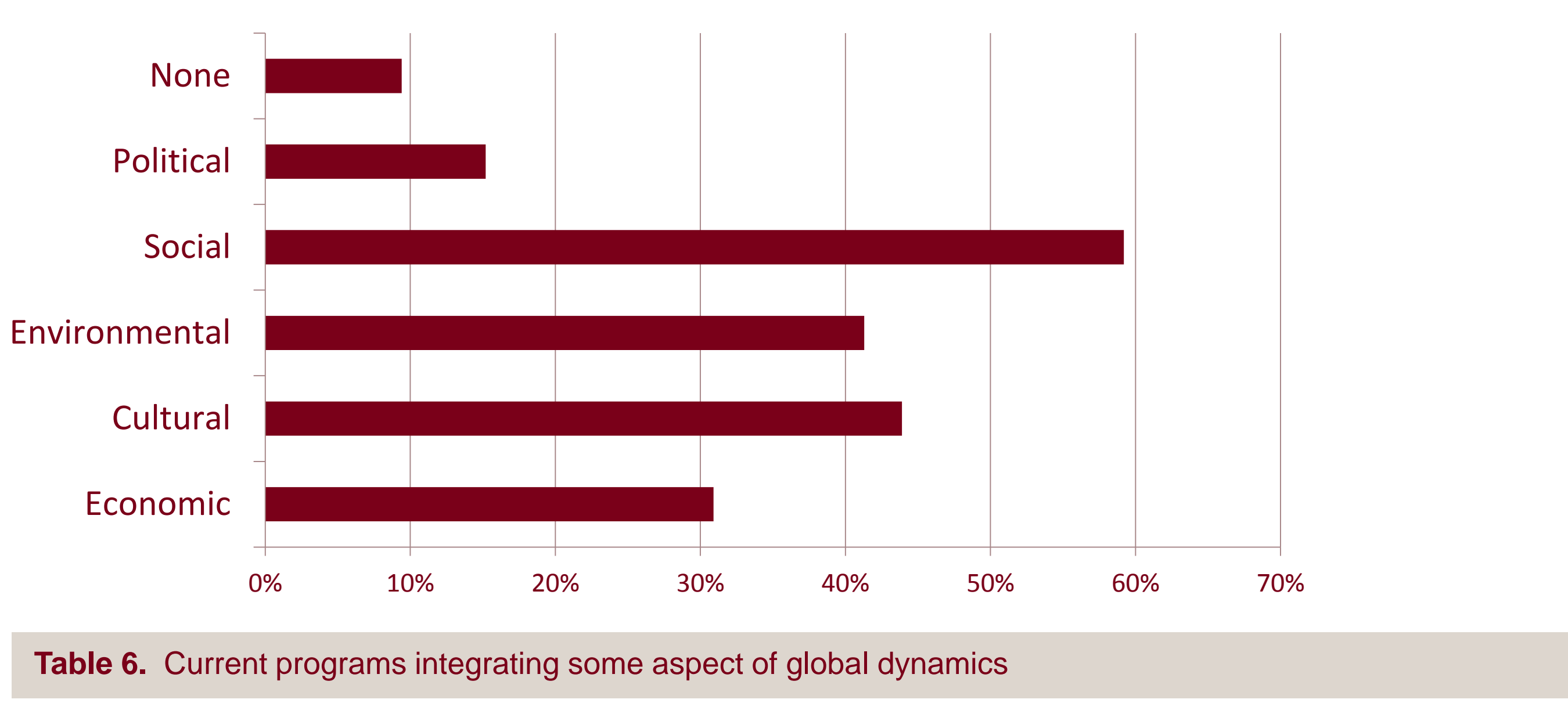
International Experience



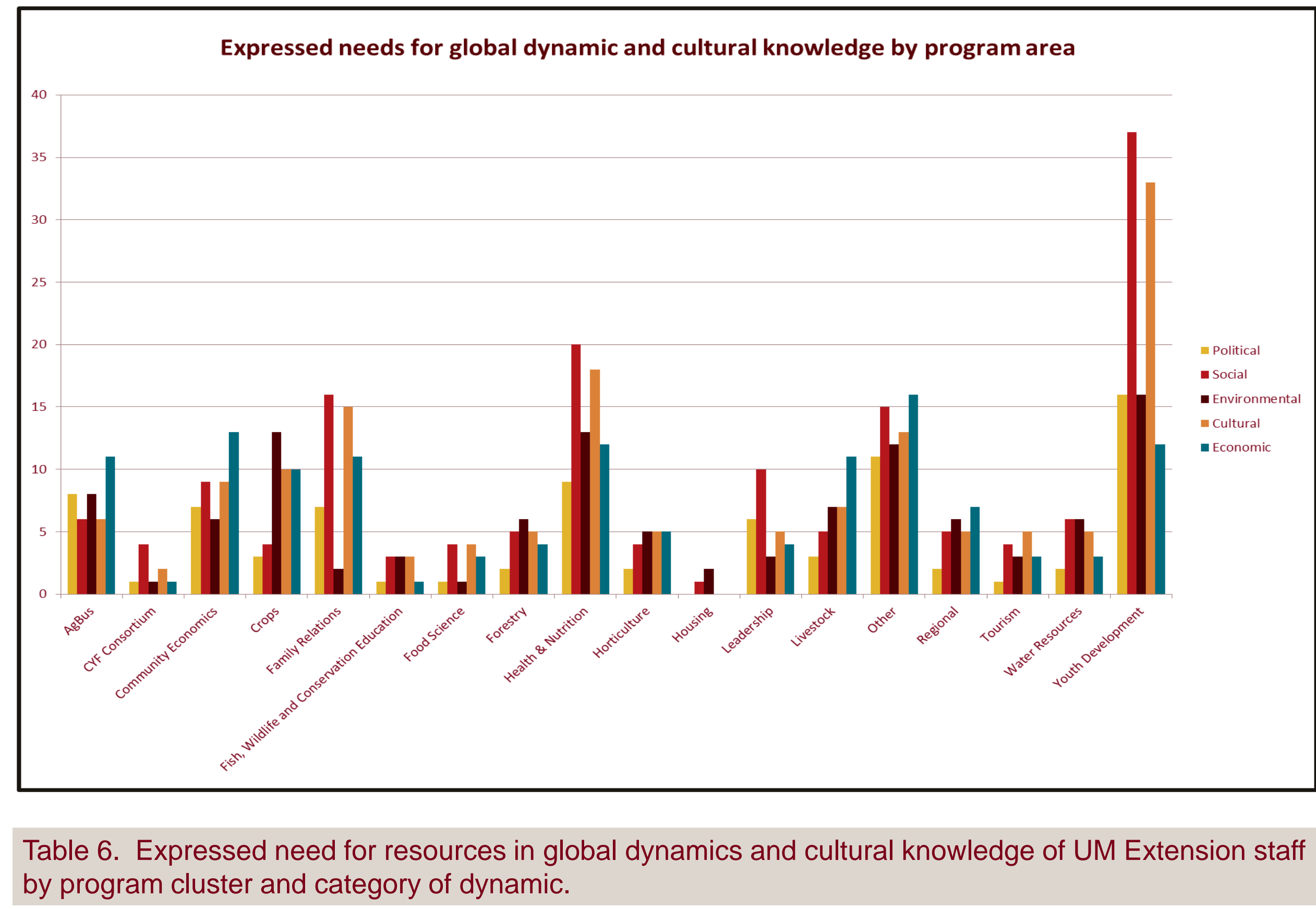
Language Experience



Programming Experience



Opportunities



Next Steps

A collaborative is formed to use these findings with staff who will define critical skills and knowledge required to work with the kaleidoscope of cultural groups within the state. The experience of staff will be key to creating a practical tool kit for professional development of educators to integrate global dynamics and cultural knowledge in their work.



Implications

This poster presents the major findings of the analysis of the inventory of experience, skills and programming as the foundation for implementing the Global Perspectives Strategy to enhance extension educators' cross-cultural skills with the goal of more effective programming with communities where they serve. The long-term impact is to have extension educators interact with learners using global dynamics and cultural knowledge to ensure participant success in programs.